

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 IOE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

HEW-08 SCI-06 AID-20 IGA-02 COA-02 AEC-11 AECE-00

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TBIO, IN

SUBJECT: INDIAN GOVERNMENT DEFENSE OF WHO-SPONSORED
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

REF: NEW DELHI 10030

SUMMARY: INDIA LEARNS A LESSON. MAYBE. AMERICAN DECLARED A
FRIENDLY COUNTRY. AS FRIENDLY, INDEED, AS THE SOVIET UNION.

1. WE REPORTED YESTERDAY (REFTEL) A STORY ON THE FRONT PAGES
OF NEWSPAPERS THROUGHOUT INDIA THAT THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZA-
TION WAS CARRYING OUT BIOLOGICAL WARFARE EXPERIMENTS IN INDIA
FINANCED BY THE UNITED STATES ARMY. THE HINDU, THE MOST CAREFUL
PAPER IN INDIA, HAD A SIMPLE HEADLINE "U.S. AUTHORITIES MAY BE
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USING INDIA FOR GERM EXPERIMENTS." THE STORY WAS A MELANGE OF

FANTASY AND FACT REFLECTING THAT PSYCHOLOGY OF PARANOID
DEPENDENCY FAMILIAR ENOUGH IN THE POST-COLONIAL WORLD.

2. WE TOOK THIS TO BE A TEST OF SORTS. IT WAS OBVIOUSLY COMMUNIST
INSPIRED -- ERIC GONSALVES, THE INDIAN MINISTER IN WASHINGTON NOW
VISITING DELHI SAID AS MUCH PRIVATELY. THE QUESTION WAS WHAT
THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SAY PUBLICALLY IN RESPONSE TO A FLOOD OF
QUESTIONS PUT DOWN IN PARLIAMENT. I CALLED ON KARAN SINGH,
MAHARAJAH OF KASHMIR AND MINISTER OF HEALTH AND NOT TOO MUCH
FAMILY PLANNING, YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. I FIRST TOLD HIM THAT WE
HAD EMPTIED OUR COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CENTER IN ATLANTA TO SEND
DOCTORS TO INDIA TO WORK ON HIS SMALL POX EPIDEMIC. HE CLAIMED
NOT TO HAVE KNOWN THIS. I THEN RAISED GERM WARFARE. GRAVE CHARGES,
HE SAID. VERY GRAVE, I REPLIED, TO THINK THAT THE INDIAN COUNCIL
ON MEDICAL RESEARCH WOULD DO GRM WARFARE RESEARCH ON INDIANS FOR
THE PENTAGON. THE INDIAN COUNCIL ON MEDICAL RESEARCH, SAID HE, IN
A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT TONE OF VOICE. YES, SAID I. BUT, SAID THE
MINISTER, I AM CHAIRMAN OF THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH.
EXACTLY, SAID THE AMBASSADOR, SOMEBODY IS AFTER YOUR JOB.

3. THIS, IN OUR VIEW, WAS THE GIST OF IT. INDIA HAS EXPELLED
THE FOREIGNERS WHO ONCE DID RUN ALL MANNER ON RESEARCH PROJECTS
(HOPEFULLY NOT IN GERM WARFARE). IN THE PAST TO ATTACK SUCH
FOREIGNERS WAS -- TO ATTACK FOREIGNERS. TO DO SO TODAY, HOWEVER,
IS TO ATTACK THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA. OUR CONCERN WAS WHETHER
THEY WOULD SEE THIS.

4. IN MY JUDGMENT THEY DID. THE BUREAUCRACY WENT TO WORK AT
FURIOUS PACE. IT EVEN MANAGED TO DIG UP THE FACT THAT A RUSSIAN
SCIENTIST TOOK PART IN SOME OF THE RESEARCH SUPPOSEDLY BEING
DONE FOR THE PENTAGON. KARAN SINGH WAS BLUNT AND UNAPOLOGE-
TIC IN HIS STATEMENT AND HIS REPLY TO QUESTIONS. "ABSOLUTE NON-
SENSE AND OUTRAGEOUS" HE SAID IN REPLY TO A CHARGE THAT INDIA
BEGGED FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS. "AMERICA," HE SAID AT ANOTHER POINT,
"IS A FRIENDLY COUNTRY, AS FRIENDLY AS THE SOVIET UNION." THESE
PROJECTS, HE SAID, "HAVE BEEN INITIATED AT OUR REQUEST. IN THE
FORMULATION OF THESE PROJECTS OUR EXPERTS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED
FROM THE VERY BEGINNING." HE GOT SO CARRIED AWAY AS TO MENTION
THE AMERICAN SMALLPOX DOCTORS. A GREAT SECRET UNTIL NOW.

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5. THE MINISTER WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO FIRM WITHOUT THE PRIME
MINISTER'S APPROVAL. I HAVE TRIED TO PERK UP A DOWNBEAT NEW YORK
TIMES STORY, PROVIDING A QUOTATION FROM AN ANONYMOUS OFFICIAL
STATING THAT THIS MAY BE SOMETHING OF A TURNING POINT, AND THAT
IN THIRTY OR FORTY YEARS SUCH CHARGES WILL BE RELATIVELY INFRE-
QUENT.

6. AS IT WILL BE OF INTEREST TO SCIENCE ADMINISTRATORS WE ARE

TRANSMITTING SEPARATELY THE TEXT OF THE MINISTER'S STATEMENT.
MOYNIHAN

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